

Harvard Kennedy School

Doctoral Research 2017

PhD in Political Economy
& Government (PEG)

PhD in Public Policy (PPOL)



HARVARD Kennedy School
JOHN F. KENNEDY SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

The PhD in Political Economy & Government (PEG) and PhD in Public Policy (PPOL) programs provide rigorous academic training to students who are committed to making the world a better place through research that inspires new ideas.

The PEG Program equips doctoral students for careers either in academia or policymaking that demand advanced knowledge of economics and political science. The PPOL Program trains doctoral students to shape new directions in public policy research and prepares them for careers in academia, government, and research organizations. PPOL students develop skills to teach the next generation of educators, researchers, and practitioners in public policy and the social sciences.

Students in both programs share an intellectual interest in the impact of politics on economic processes and outcomes, the reciprocal influence of economic conditions on political life, and developing scholarly research that empowers public policy practitioners to make informed decisions.

This document provides some of the students' publications and presentations over the past year.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT



Pamela Ban

With Alexander Fouirnaies, Andrew Hall, and James M. Snyder, Jr.

“How Newspapers Reveal

Political Power.” Forthcoming, *Political Science Research & Methods*, Revise and Resubmit.

Abstract: Political science is in large part the study of power, but power itself is difficult to measure. We argue that we can use newspaper coverage—in particular, the relative amount of space devoted to particular subjects in newspapers—to measure the relative power of an important set of political actors and offices. We use a new dataset containing nearly 50 million historical newspaper pages from 2,700 local U.S. newspapers over the years 1877-1977. We define and discuss a measure of power we develop based on observed word frequencies, and we validate it through a series of analyses. Overall, we find that the relative coverage of political actors and of political offices is a strong indicator of political power for the cases we study. To illustrate its usefulness, we apply the measure to understand when (and where) state party committees lost their power. Taken together, the paper sheds light on the nature of political news coverage and offers both a new dataset and a new measure for studying political power in a wide set of contexts.

Ban, Pamela. “Bipartisanship and Bicameralism: A New Inside View of Congressional Committees.” Presented at the Yale University Center for

the Study of American Politics Conference; the Society for Political Methodology Annual Meeting; the Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting; and the American Political Science Association Dissertation Workshop.



Soeren Henn

“Indirect Rule by Armed Groups: Causes and Consequences in the Eastern DRC.” Presented at the

Comparative Politics and Formal Theory Conference (CPFT) and the Midwest Political Science Association Conference.

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT



Marek Hlavac

“Performance of Political Parties in the 2016 Parliamentary Election in Slovakia: Regional Comparisons

and District-Level Determinants,” *Regional & Federal Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3, April 2016.

Abstract: This paper explores the results of the 2016 parliamentary election in the Slovak Republic, with a special emphasis on the regional aspects of participating political parties’ election campaigns. It summarizes the election results for the country as a whole as well as separately by region. An empirical analysis of party electoral performance at the district level suggests that the incumbent Smer party tended to do well in districts with higher rates of unemployment and a lower proportion of university-educated population. Similar patterns hold for the Slovak ethnic nationalist Slovak National Party and the far-right People’s Party Our Slovakia. By contrast, the two parties that presented themselves as being starkly opposed to the Smer government’s policies—Freedom and Solidarity and Ordinary People and Independent Personalities—exhibit greater support in districts with more university-educated voters and lower unemployment rates.

www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13597566.2016.1178114

Hlavac, Marek. “TableMaker: An Excel Macro for Publication-Quality Tables,” *Journal of Statistical Software*, Vol. 70.

Abstract: This article introduces TableMaker, an Excel macro that produces publication-quality tables and includes them as new sheets in workbooks. The macro provides an intuitive graphical user interface that allows for the full customization of all table features. It also allows users to save and load table templates, and thus allows layouts to be both reproducible and transferable. It is distributed in a single computer file. As such,

the macro is easy to share as well as accessible to even beginning and casual users of Excel. Since it allows for the quick creation of reproducible and fully customizable tables, TableMaker can be very useful to academics, policy-makers, and businesses by making the presentation and formatting of results faster and more efficient.

www.jstatsoft.org/article/view/v070c03

Hlavac, Marek. “ExtremeBounds: Extreme Bounds Analysis in R,” *Journal of Statistical Software*, Vol. 72, No. 9, August 2016.

Abstract: This article introduces the R package ExtremeBounds to perform extreme bounds analysis (EBA), a sensitivity test that examines how robustly the dependent variable of a regression model is related to a variety of possible determinants. ExtremeBounds supports Leamer’s EBA that focuses on the upper and lower extreme bounds of regression coefficients as well as Sala-i-Martin’s EBA, which considers their entire distribution. In contrast to existing alternatives, it can estimate models of a variety of user-defined sizes, use regression models other than ordinary least squares, incorporate non-linearities in the model specification, and apply custom weights and standard errors. To alleviate concerns about the multicollinearity and conceptual overlap of examined variables, ExtremeBounds allows users to specify sets of mutually exclusive variables, and can restrict the analysis to coefficients from regression models that yield a variance inflation factor within a prespecified limit.

www.jstatsoft.org/article/view/v072i09

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND GOVERNMENT



Edoardo Teso

With Emanuele Colonnelli and Mounu Prem. “Patronage in the allocation of public sector jobs.”

Presented at the RIDGE/LACEA Conference in Rio de Janeiro, and at the PACDEV Conference at Stanford.

Abstract: Selecting competent and motivated public sector workers is one of the major goals, and challenges, of both developed and developing economies. Understanding the frictions in the process through which the government selects applicants for a public sector job is therefore crucial to ensure the presence of a well-functioning bureaucracy. Patronage—the appointment of political supporters to government jobs—is often considered the leading friction in this selection process.

In this paper, we provide causal estimates of the importance of patronage in public sector employment, using a novel dataset on the universe of public sector workers in Brazil for the period 1997-2014 to follow the labor market careers of more than 2,000,000 political supporters, namely local political candidates and campaign donors. We use a regression discontinuity design that leverages very competitive municipal elections to identify the causal impact of being aligned to the party in power on individual careers in the public sector. We find that being a political supporter of the ruling party leads to a significant increase in the probability of having a public sector job. Strikingly, the presence of patronage is significant throughout the entire public sector hierarchy, from leadership and managerial positions to more elementary occupations as front-service providers. We find that patronage leads to the selection of less educated and lower-quality public sector workers. The supporters who benefit the most from their political connections are less educated and have lower ability, but have contributed more money or brought more votes to their party.



Jonathan Weigel

“Building State and Citizen: Experimental Evidence from a Tax Campaign in Congo.” Presented at the New England

Workshop of Empirical Political Science (NEWEPS) at Columbia University, April 30, 2017 and the Working Group on African Political Economy (WGAPE) Annual Meeting at UC Berkeley June 5, 2017.

Weigel, Jonathan with Sara Lowes, Nathan Nunn, and James A. Robinson. “The Evolution of Culture and Institutions: Evidence from the Kuba Kingdom.” Forthcoming, *Econometrica*.

PUBLIC POLICY



Jonathan Baker

“Subsidies for Succulents: the Welfare Impacts of Las Vegas’ Cash-for-Grass Rebate Program.” Presented

at Association of Environmental and Resource Economists Annual Summer Conference, June 2016 and the Agricultural and Applied Economics Association Annual Meeting, August 2016.



Patrick A. Behrer

With Daniel B. Gingerich, Xiaodi Sun, Inês L. Azevedo, and Meagan S. Mauter. “Spatially resolved

air-water emissions tradeoffs improve regulatory impact analyses for electricity generation.” *PNAS*, Vol. 114 (8) 1862-1867; published ahead of print February 6, 2017.

Behrer, A. Patrick with Meagan S. Mauter. “Allocating Damage Compensation in a Federalist System: Lessons from Spatially Resolved Air Emissions in the Marcellus.” *Environmental Science & Technology*, 2017, 51 (7), 3600-3608.



Cuicui Chen

“Navigating Market-Based Regulation: Lessons from the U.S. Acid Rain Program.” Presented at the

18th Annual University of Colorado Environmental and Resource Economics Workshop at Vail, Colorado, September 2016.

Chen, Cuicui. “Brand Leadership, Competitive Pressure, and Social Marketing in the High-End Fashion Industry.” Presented at the INFORMS Annual Meeting at Nashville, Tennessee, November 2016.

Chen, Cuicui with Rebecca Epanchin-Niell and Robert Haight (2017), “Optimal Inspection of Imports to Prevent Invasive Pest Introduction,” accepted at *Risk Analysis*.

Chen, Cuicui with Richard Zeckhauser (2017), “Collective Action in an Asymmetric World,” revise and resubmit at *Journal of Public Economics*.



Todd Gerarden

With Joseph Aldy and Richard Sweeney. “Capital Versus Output Subsidies: Implications for Alternative

Incentives for Wind Energy.” Presented at the ASSA Annual Meeting in Chicago, January 2017.

PUBLIC POLICY



Jennifer Kao

“The Impact of Health Care Financing on Research and Health Outcomes: Evidence from Academic

Medical Centers.” Presented at NBER-IFS Program on the Value of Medical Research.

Kao, Jennifer. “Regulatory Incentives for Pharmaceutical Innovation: the FDA’s Breakthrough Therapy Designation.” Presented at Harvard-MIT Regulatory Science Symposium, March 2017.

Kao, Jennifer. “Regulatory Strategy Decisions for New Medical Technologies: Evidence from New Use Approvals and Off-Label Drug Uses.” Presented at Munich Summer Institute, May 2017.



Christine Mulhern

With Matthew M. Chingos and Rebecca J. Griffiths. “Can Low-Cost Online Summer Math Programs

Improve Student Preparation for College-Level Math? Evidence From Randomized Experiments at Three Universities.” *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 1-23, April 2017.

Mulhern, Christine with Matthew M. Chingos, Rebecca J. Griffiths, and Richard R. Spies. “Interactive Online Learning on Campus: Comparing Students’ Outcomes in Hybrid and

Traditional Courses in the University System of Maryland.” *The Journal of Higher Education*, 88(2), 210-233, December 2016.

Mulhern, Christine. “Oh Brother, Where Start Thou? Sibling spillovers in college enrollment.” Working paper joint with Joshua Goodman, Michael Hurwitz, and Jonathan Smith. Presented at American Education Finance and Policy, March 2017.



Gabriel Tourek

“Simplified’ Income Taxation: Evidence from a Rwandan Reform.”

Presented at the Development and Political Economics SF Bay Area PhD Student Conference, Stanford University, May 6, 2017.



Yeling Tan

“State Strategies under Global Rules: Chinese Industrial Policy in the WTO Era.” Preparing for submission.

Presented at the American Political Science Association Annual Conference, September 2016; the Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, March 2017; and the Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference, April 2017.

Doctoral Programs

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